REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-4 and 16 are all the claims pending in the application. Non-elected claims 5-15, 17 and 18 are canceled by this amendment.

Applicant notes that a number of editorial amendments have been made to the specification and abstract for grammatical and general readability purposes. No new matter has been added.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Oesterholt et al. (U.S. 6,130,514) in view of Park et al. (U.S. 5,731,375).

Claim 1, as amended, recites the feature of a curved surface section which is embedded around a base of a support shaft base on a base plate, wherein the curved surface section curvedly connects an external surface of the support shaft with a top surface of the base plate. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited prior art fails to teach or suggest at least this feature recited in claim 1.

Oesterholt discloses a mirror having a base shaft 101 and a base flange 102 (see Fig. 5a). The base shaft 101 includes radially projecting fingers 103 and keyways 104 which are disposed between the radially projecting fingers 103 (see Fig. 5a and col. 6, lines 30-36). The base flange 102 includes an inner ring 151 having a first groove 153, and an outer ring 152 having a second groove 156 (see Fig. 5a and col. 8, lines 25-31).

Thus, as shown in Fig. 5a, while Oesterholt discloses a first groove 153 that connects to the base shaft 101 via fingers 103, Applicant respectfully submits that the first groove 153 does not curvedly connect a top surface of the base flange 102 to the base shaft 101. Instead, in

Oesterholt, the first groove 153 connects to the fingers 103 of the base shaft 101 at an angle (i.e., at an edge).

As explained in the specification of the present application, if a sharp edge is formed between the support shaft and the base plate, a stress concentrates thereon (see page 10, lines 7-9 of the specification). By providing a curved surface to connect the support shaft base to the base plate, the stress concentration is relieved at a junction between the support shaft and the base plate, thereby helping to improve the durability of the device (see page 10, lines 9-13).

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that Oesterholt fails to disclose or suggest the feature of a curved surface section which is embedded around a base of a support shaft base on a base plate, wherein the curved surface section curvedly connects an external surface of the support shaft with a top surface of the base plate, as recited in claim 1.

Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that Park fails to cure this deficiency of Oesterholt. Applicant notes that Park was applied by the Examiner solely for the teaching of a synthetic resin that is used for parts of an automobile.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of the Oesterholt and Park fails to disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious all of the features recited in claim 1. Thus, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4 and 16 depend from claim 1 and are therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

In addition, Applicant notes that claim 3 has been amended to recite that a flat section for supporting a thrust washer is formed at an outside periphery of the support shaft base on the top surface of the base plate at the same level as the top surface of the base plate and which connects

between the external surface of the support shaft and the top surface of the base plate by crossing the curved surface section. Applicant respectfully submits that the cited prior art fails to disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious such a feature.

In the Office Action, the Examiner points to the inclined end walls 154, 155 of Oesterholt as corresponding to the flat section as recited in claim 3. Applicants note that the inclined end walls 154, 155 of Oesterholt are utilized to connect the first groove 153 to the inner ring 151 (see Figs. 5a, 5b and col. 8, lines 25-31). Applicant respectfully submits, however, that the inclined end walls 154 155 are in no way whatsoever utilized for supporting a thrust washer, as recited in amended claim 3.

Moreover, Applicant respectfully submits that Park fails to cure this deficiency of Oesterholt. As noted above, Park was applied by the Examiner solely for the teaching of a synthetic resin that is used for parts of an automobile.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 is patentable over the cited prior art, an indication of which is kindly requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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